

Drexel Hill, PA – Continuing his efforts to engage as many of his constituents as possible, Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) held his ninth health care town hall since August 1 tonight at the Drexel Hill Baptist Church. Amid strong reactions from a wide variety of viewpoints on the issue, the Congressman was joined by two members of Drexel Hill Baptist's Ministerial Staff, Senior Pastor Rev. Dr. Jeri E. Williams and Pastor Emeritus Rev. Lawrence A. Williams. Congressman Sestak stayed late into the night, past 10:00, taking questions from the overflow crowd of more than 400. He discussed his efforts to ensure accessible, affordable, quality health care for all Americans, and described how a public plan option is critical to that effort.

"Giving people a choice between a public plan and a private plan will help lower costs and improve quality in the market place," said Congressman Sestak, noting that in the Philadelphia area one company has about 70 percent of all private plans. "The public option -- which is only a choice -- will add needed competition."

During the event, the Congressman spoke about his determination to see that the provisions in the bill he helped shape and pass in the Education and Labor Committee are made into law. Health care is a personal issue for him and the reason he got into politics after a 31 year career in the Navy.

"The military's TRICARE plan allowed my daughter to have the best possible treatment for her brain tumor at age 4 and I believe everyone should have the same level of care as she did," said the Congressman. "It is my responsibility to listen and address concerns, and explain the facts of the legislation under consideration. That is why I held my first Summit to discuss health care - with more than 400 attendees - the day after Congress went out of session and why I am participating in town halls and other events to make the case for real health insurance reform."

Almost 1,000 people turned out for a Town Hall in Philadelphia, where the Congressman stayed five hours in order to answer all of their questions.

The Congressman explained the necessity of H.R. 3200, America's Affordable Health Choices Act of 2009, reminding the audience that more than 10 million Americans have lost their health insurance since the last time Congress considered reform 15 years ago, while costs have risen 120 percent. The average family plan is already \$1,100 more expensive because of costs passed down from health providers, which are not reimbursed when they treat the uninsured for

a health emergency. In addition, the bill will lower costs through preventive care by eliminating co-pays for screenings and exams and reducing trips to the emergency room. The bill also invests in comparative effectiveness research to ensure everyone has the best medical information to improve the quality of care for all patients.

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, the Congressman was the first Director of Deep Blue, the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the Global War on Terrorism. He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Congressman Sestak is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. Congress.